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an air handler comprising an airflow path comprising an air supply path and a return path, and a fan for drawing air through from said airflow path into said pan and from said pan into said airflow path.

74. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 73 further comprising a re-circulation path for mixing air from said pan with air in said air supply flow path.

75. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 73 wherein said air handler further comprises a heater element for warming air inside said air handler.

76. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 73 wherein at least one of said pan and said air handler comprises a light source for illuminating said pan.

77. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 73 wherein said air handler is adapted for rapid chilling and refrigerated thawing of items placed in said pan.

78. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 77 wherein said air handler is operable in a chill mode, said air handler moving air at a temperature of about 21°F in said chill mode.

79. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 77 wherein said air handler is operable in a thaw mode, said air handler moving air at a temperature and velocity that maintains a surface temperature of a thawed item within acceptable limits.

80. A quick chill and thaw system for a refrigerator including a food storage compartment, said quick chill and thaw system comprising:

a pan; and

an air handler in flow communication with said pan, said air handler comprising a heater element and configured for maintaining a substantially constant temperature within said pan in a thawing operation.

81. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 80 wherein said air handler is configured for discharging air at a temperature and velocity to maintain a surface temperature of a thawed item within acceptable limits.

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82. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 81 wherein said air temperature is about 40°F to about 50°F.

83. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance within Claim 80 wherein said air handler further comprises an air supply flow path and a return flow path.

84. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 83 further comprising a damper element in flow communication with said supply flow path and said return flow path.

85. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 83 further comprising a re-circulation flow path for mixing of air in said air supply flow path with air from said re-circulation path.

86. A quick chill and thaw system for a refrigerator including a fresh food compartment, said quick chill and thaw system comprising:

a pan; and

an air handler in flow communication with said pan, said air handler comprising a flow path comprising a supply path and a return path, and a heater element located in said airflow path.

87. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 86 wherein said air handler is configured for discharging air at a temperature and velocity to maintain a surface temperature of a thawed item within acceptable limits.

88. A quick chill and thaw system in accordance with Claim 87 wherein said air temperature is about 40°F to about 50°F.

89. A refrigerator comprising:

a fresh food storage compartment;

a freezer storage compartment;

a pan mounted in one of said fresh food compartment and said freezer compartment;

and

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an air handler mounted in one of said fresh food compartment and said freezer compartment and placed in flow communication with the other of said fresh food and freezer compartment and further in flow communication with said pan, said air handler adapted for producing convective airflow at a decreased temperature relative to a temperature of said fresh food compartment when in a quick chill mode, and at an increased temperature relative to said temperature of said fresh food compartment when in a thaw mode.

90. A refrigerator in accordance with Claim 89 wherein said pan is mounted in said refrigerator compartment.

91. A refrigerator in accordance with Claim 89 wherein said air handler is mounted in said fresh food compartment.

92. A refrigerator in accordance with Claim 89 wherein said air handler comprises an air supply flow path and a fan for discharging air into said pan.

93. A refrigerator in accordance with Claim 89 further comprising a vane for dispersing air from said air handler within said pan.

94. A refrigerator in accordance with Claim 89 further comprising a plenum extension in flow communication with said air handler for distributing air within said pan.

Remarks

The Office Action mailed February 26, 2003 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof. Submitted herewith is a submission of Marked Up Claims.

Claims 16-94 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-72 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement. Claims 1-15 have been cancelled. Claims 73-94 are newly added.

A fee calculation sheet for the newly added claims along with authorization to charge a deposit account in the amount of the calculated fee are submitted herewith. In addition, and in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a), a three month extension of time is submitted herewith to extend the due date of the response to the Office Action dated February 26, 2003, for the above-identified patent application from March 26, 2003, through and including June 26,